

style, and there can be little doubt that the font is of coeval date.

About 40 years since, the family of the Mathews, resident in the parish, originally members of the Society of Friends, having conformed to the Church of England, presented on the occasion a new (the present) font, which bears an inscription with date 1767. The original font was consequently removed, and laid for many years neglected in the church yard, till it was again removed into a neighbouring farm-yard, where it was first used as a stepping-stone for mounting horses, and subsequently as a water-trough. A few years afterwards, one of the family leaving for London, had it conveyed thither, and erected in his garden at Kennington; thence it followed this gentleman to a villa about six miles from London on the road to Craydon, and it was here it first came into the possession of Mr. Y. Akerman, F.S.A., to whom it was traced by Mr. William Hewitt, Jun., of Reading, who has kindly obliged me with this information of its progress. Mr. Akerman having offered it to the Rev. J. B. Reade, I called to examine it, and of course reported on its eligibility for St. John's, a church of equal interest and similar antiquity, where it is now safely sheltered, having in its journey to Buckinghamshire by railway completed, I trust, its last pilgrimage. When it first came into our hands it exhibited only the faintest signs of the elaborate sculpture with which it was adorned; nor was it without considerable trouble, in the hands of a very excellent workman, that the whole was accurately restored. The result, however, has, I think, amply repaid both the trouble and expense.

Although I have submitted it to many antiquarian friends (since which Mr. Reade has presented a model of it to one of the societies), I have never yet been able to obtain a satisfactory solution of the symbolical sculpture with which it is so profusely decorated, and I shall feel much indebted to any of your readers who can throw any light on the matter for my information. I should observe, that the upper portion, viz. the basin itself, above the dotted lines, is the part referred to in the foregoing observations; the base is entirely new.

The tale that the history of this font discloses is, I regret to say, too common; indeed, the fact of its preservation, under any circumstances, is rather an exception to the general rule than otherwise. The mis-directed zeal of parishioners, added to the barbaric restorations and periodical cleansings of an ignorant set of men, most extraordinarily mis-called "Church gardens," have almost completed the destruction of what the frenzy of the Puritan Iconoclast has spared.

The clergy, too, unlike their great freemason predecessors, have not sufficiently used their influence in staying these abominations.—In many instances from their own want of antiquarian information, but frequently from polite deference to influential parishioners, who think the service of an architect would cause a useless increase of their church-rates. I could name a reverend gentleman, whose garden is now graced with the base of an old early English font for a sun-dial; the basin, containing a fine aloe, next the entrance, and the smaller stones with divers flints, decorating the borders of a flower-bed. His church, a good specimen of decorated English, has a small mahogany slab next the vestry, for the convenient position of a three-penny piece of grey pottery.

With apologies for this long trespass on your space, I am, Sir, &c., Jos. S. ANCONA.
11, Beaufort-buildings, Strand.

GROWING WILLOWS IN SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION.—This extraordinary phenomenon is said to have been recently exhibited on the banks of the Cam, where one fine willow is spoken of as pouring forth clouds of smoke from its half-burned stem, while yet in the full vigour of robust vegetable health. Its very foliage, though full of sap, was charred, and its whole substance at length burnt like tinder to the core. In cases of spontaneous animal combustion, one can see the possibility, at least, of the body of drunkards being full of inflammable fluids, ready to take fire like phosphorus on the slightest occasion; but how can so singular a phenomenon as this be explained? The fluids and solids of trees such as these ought to be submitted to chemical analysis.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COL- LATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Transactions of the Archaeological Society of Rome.—The last volume of the *Monumenti inediti* and *Annali* of that society presents a rich harvest of antiquarian research. It contains, amongst others, observations on the head of a Juno, found near Castellamare, which, besides the merit of purest Greek workmanship, presents that goddess in a youthfully virginal character, while the statues hitherto known exhibited her at a more mature age. Mr. Hettner remarks, that it belongs to that class of Juno statues, where she is personifying the goddess of nature, discernible by the stellated *Aegis*, or sea-monsters, in her train; in opposition to those representations where her psychic attributes are more put in relief. In this respect her name *Trigeneia* is especially adapted.—The splendid bronze-group from Pompeii, Hercules with the stag, which is now the chief ornament of the Palermo Museum, is represented in this volume on a larger scale than has been hitherto done, shewing how beautifully it was adapted to the architecture of the fountain, of which it formed once the ornament.—Amongst the reliefs, those of the Harpy monument of Xanthus, of the British Museum, are very interesting. The text of Mr. Braun analyzes the single scenes of the sculptures, and by a guarded comparison with Greek works, endeavours to elucidate them, as our deficient knowledge of Lycian art and mythology has left hitherto the whole enigmatic. Mr. B. thinks that the anterior part of the monument, where a mourning woman, and opposite to her a virgin, are to be seen, towards whom three other female figures, in the shape of Grecian *Hora*, are approaching—points to the myths of Ceres and Proserpine, and therefore to the old eastern belief of a continuance of existence after death. The other sides of the sarcophagus would then represent the different stadia of human life, and the harpy-shaped females with the rude children, would be a type of the constant threatening of death amidst the paths of life.—C. Cavaroni has furnished the representation of a glass vessel of the museum of Modena, with the name of the maker, *Ennion*, and added some remarks on the manufactory of glass in Egypt and Phœnicia, with several names of glass artists discovered by Mr. C.—[These *Annali* were hitherto published at Rome, but for some reason or other, that for next year will appear in Paris.]

The Ancient Castle of the Isle of Chios (Kos).—As this venerable structure has, of late, been nearly blown up by the vandalism of some Turk artillerymen, a retrospect of its antiquities may be interesting. The northern point of the Isle of Kos (the ancient Scandaria), forms a sandy triangular tongue of land, only distant three miles from the adjacent Asiatic shore. On the inner, south-west corner of the bay lies the modern city, situated on the ruins of the old. It possessed once an artificially constructed harbour, and on its east side a stone jetty, protecting it against the surf and the waves of the open sea. On this dyke, the Knights of St. John had constructed in the fourteenth century a fortified castle. It was separated from the city by a broad ditch, by which, formerly, the water of the sea circulated through the basin of the harbour; now all dry and sanded over. One bridge only was laid across it. Near this bridge is a sort of open square, and in its middle the gigantic *Platanus*, under which (according to popular tradition) Hippocrates composed his aphorisms. It is strange and worthy of observation, that while the venerable branches of this huge vegetable have been, in subsequent periods, supported by marble pillars, the fibres and filaments of the bark have thus overgrown the upper part of these pillars, that during heavy gales, they are supported by several inches from the ground—a strange sample of the metaphorical action of crude nature. South of this place is the modern city, of miserable appearance, built of the blocks of the ancient knight-structures, with some ruins of churches and other public buildings of those times. It can, however, not be compared with Rhodes, where all architectural splendour had been lavished around the seat of the grand master and chapter of the order. The castle above alluded to, formed an oblong square of great extent, the outer walls of

which were built of antique blocks, and about 30 or 40 feet high. The entrance to the castle was never permitted to any stranger by the Turkish authorities; but persons who had been there, say, that a beautiful chapel of St. John the Baptist, of Gothic architecture, besides other knight-structures, many antique statues, basso-relievos, and busts, were to be met with. This is the more probable, as even on the outer side of the south-east part of the exterior wall of the castle, four pieces of the frieze of a temple with Dionysian representations—of the very best period of Greek art, are to be seen, although somewhat mutilated, and bedaubed with a thick white-wash. This bids fair for the existence of other art-remains in the interior of the building—the more plausible, as the knights had placed in their fortress of St. Petros at Budun (Halicarnassus), the frieze slabs of the mausoleum. (The present destruction of the castle, has, no doubt, laid it open even to Turkish suspicion and ignorance, and we would invite such of our readers, as are strolling through the Grecian Isles—or such as could and ought, to take advantage of a rare opportunity, to do something novel, at a cheap outlay.)

The Chinese Collection.—made during the late visit of the French embassy in that country, consisting of 400 specimens of great interest in the departments of arts, sciences, and manufactures, is exhibited now in one of the halls of the Secretaries of State for Commerce at Paris.

The Isthmus of Panama line of railway.—is to be begun in November next, as Mr. Klein, the *Chargé d'Affaires* (?) of the company, has received every encouragement from the Government of New Grenada. The works will be executed under the superintendence of Mr. Courtines, a French engineer.

The French Academy of the Fine Arts.—on the death of their member for the department of architecture, Mr. Vaudoyer, have elected Messrs. Gilbert, Gisors, and Châtillon, from whom the king has to choose one, according to custom.

The Lunatic Asylum of Charenton.—has been repairing and enlarging for some time past, under the care of Mr. Gilbert, architect of the Government. The construction of the chapel has been just finished, and its walls are decorated with paintings in encaustic, by Mr. F. Dubois, late one of the recipients of the great prize at Rome.

The Embankment of the Rhine near Strasburg.—is proceeding rapidly, as the Government have this year voted 900,000 francs for that purpose. Some new cuts have been begun, while others have been made available for navigation. Between the above city and Lauenburg navigation has been abridged by some miles. The steamers, which up to 1835 required five hours for the above distance, make it now in three. Several swinging bridges are also projected to replace the old ferries.

The Lower House of Bavaria.—have voted 24,000 florins (2,000*l.*) as an instalment towards the purchase and transport of the Numismatic collection of the brothers Longo of Messina. It contains some of those unsurpassed gold medals (basso-relievos) of Agrigentum and Syracuse—patterns of the finest art-taste ever exhibited by man.

Ukase of the Emperor of Russia relating to the Rights of Art Productions.—The following are the chief features of this liberal and encouraging enactment. Painters, sculptors, architects, engravers, dye-sinkers, and all who work in the departments of fine arts, will enjoy, besides the rights inherent in any property, that of art-proprietorship for their whole life. It implies the unlimited and exclusive right of multiplying and publishing. After the demise of the artist, this right descends to his heirs. If there be no other provision made during his lifetime. Persons thus put in possession of the author's rights, enjoy them for twenty-five years after his death. This term can be prolonged ten years more under certain conditions. Art productions purchased by government, or made for the imperial palaces, museums, or offices, are property of government. The same applies to art-works made for private individuals, provided the price has been paid, and no provision made to the contrary. Pictures, statues, and other art productions may be sold in execution, but such purchase does not imply the above art-proprietorship. J. L.—T.